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## EXPERIENCES OF A KNOCKER-UP.

SOME time ago, while paying a professional visit at the house of a small tradesman in the town of B—, in the north of England, I made the acquaintance of an interesting old woman, who upon the occasion in question was nursing the tradesman's wife. There are persons, especially of the gentler sex, who will not be said Nay in their attempts to win your confidence; and such was Mrs Waters, the old lady whom I have named. We became intimate in a few minutes; and circumstances causing me to prolong my visit for several hours, I left the house as familiar with the dame's history as if I had known her for many years.

I have styled her an interesting woman. So she was. Her appearance, I grant, was not attractive. She bore no trace of beauty; neither had she refinement either of speech or manner, being somewhat brusque and hasty both in word and action; yet there was an irresistible power in the rapid glance of her large bright eyes; and although at first you might be led to believe, from the hastiness which marked all her movements as she attended to the requirements of the house and family, that she must be harsh and unfeeling in her disposition, she was really one of the kindest and most tender-hearted of women. I soon found out that she was a neighbour, and that she possessed independent means, which she had acquired by her own unaided industry; that she had also maintained an invalid husband for years, and had educated and given a profession to her only son and child.

I resolved to become better acquainted with the old dame; and as I did not scruple to put questions, I gleaned from her what shall form the subject of the present paper. Her designation as a 'knocker-up' will become plain as I proceed. In reply to an inquiry she said: 'O dear, no! I am not unwilling to tell you how I made my independency. Why should I be? An honest woman need not be afraid of anything. I made it, sir, by knocking-up; every

penny of it. Ay, you may well look surprised, for I fancy you don't know what knocking-up is; or if you do, you are wondering how I could save a fortune out of such a line of action. No; I don't mean to say that I had no other way of making money. I started a shop after I began to knock up; but every penny I made by shop-keeping was spent in keeping my family; and when my son was put to business, some of my otherwise-made money went along with it; but every penny which I put by, and the income on which I now live, was got by knocking-up.

'You may well ask how I, a woman, should ever have thought of such a means of living, or should have ventured upon it. Well, to tell the truth, I never thought of it; that is, I did not invent it; it was brought before me; and I was in too great need to be very nice. I believe I was near the first, if not the very first who earned money by regularly knocking up; at anyrate I knew of none who were in that line. The thing was brought about in this way. My husband was a delicate man from our first acquaintance. And he was, bless you! as different from me in spirit and ways as a summer day is from a winter day. He had hardly a morsel of *fend* in him. I've often wondered what we should have done, or what would have become of us, had it been I that had been laid up instead of him. But you see, sir, Providence had a hand in the matter. It was well in many ways, I may say in all ways, that he was afflicted; for you see had it been *me*, what an ill-tempered impatient creature I should have been.

'Was it an illness that fell upon him which laid him aside, do you ask? No; not exactly; I'll tell you. We had been married about six years, and our son was about four years old, when Waters happened on a misfortune; he was in the act of lifting a heavy weight in the foundry in which he worked, when something snapped or gave way in his back. He was brought home between two men; and from that day until his death, more than fifteen years afterwards, he never did a stroke of work. Poor fellow!

'Yes; you're right; the knocking-up scheme followed. It was very singular. I had been down to the foundry one Friday evening for the bit of pay which the masters kindly allowed him for a while, when I got into conversation with one of the better sort of men who were employed in the works. I said to him that I believed I should have the home to keep over our heads, and that I was willing to do anything that would help therein, when he said quite suddenly like: "If you will knock me up at three o'clock every morning but Sunday, I will give you half-a-crown a week." At first I thought he was joking; but when I saw that he was sincere, I closed in with the offer; for something said within me that that would be the beginning of something better still.

'The reason why knocking-up is so widespread nowadays is this: people soon get so used to the alarm-clock that it fails to awake them, or if it awake them, they are at times so sleepy that they drop off again before the alarm runs out. This was the case with the person who asked me to awaken him; he had lost many mornings through over-sleeping the time. He was in the designing line; and he said he got more work done and of a better sort during the quiet hours of morning than at any other time. At anyrate this was his statement, though afterwards another reason was assigned for his habit; so he was anxious to be up at three o'clock. Well, I engaged with him; and a good thing it was for me, for before a year had gone over my head I had thirty customers of the like kind. No; not for the same hour in the morning, nor for the like pay—begging your pardon—but mostly for the time between five and six o'clock.

'I have no objection whatever to tell you what I used to earn; why should I? But let me tell you first how I went on adding to my business, if I may call it a business. At the end of the first year, as I have said, I had thirty customers. Year by year they went on increasing, until at the end of five years I had near eighty houses to go to; and for the thirty years that I followed knocking-up after that—thirty-five in all—I never fell below that number. Sometimes I had as many as ninety-five. What did they pay? All prices. When I got a few more early customers in addition to my first one, I knocked him a shilling a week off; for I could not fashion to take half-a-crown. So all who were knocked up before four o'clock paid me eightpence a week; those who had to be awakened soon after four gave me a shilling a week; whilst those who had to be aroused from five to six o'clock paid from sixpence to threepence weekly, according to time and distance. Of course the greater number of customers belonged to the threepenny class.

'You can't see how I managed to get through so large a number of houses in so short a time? But I did, at anyrate. I found system to be a needed thing, you may be sure. Then I found out near cuts to different neighbourhoods. And I took care not to let the grass grow under my feet. Besides, I fancy I had a knack of rousing my employers in a short time. Perhaps my knock or ring or way of tapping was more effective than that of other knockers-up. However that may be, I got through my engagements morning by morning. I see you are eager to get at my weekly earnings. Well, I'll keep you no longer in suspense. For

thirty years I never earned less than thirty shillings a week; mostly thirty-five; and when I had a good lot of far-away or very early customers, I picked up as high as forty shillings in a week. You stare; but what I say is true. Two pounds a week for summoning folks to their work, of a morning.

'I am not a very strong or healthy body now; how can a woman of seventy years expect to be without ache or pain after a life like mine? But for thirty-five years wherein I followed the knocking-up line I never had what may be called a badly day. Bless you, sir, I hadn't time to be laid up! I believe my early rising, and the exercise in the open air, kept me in health; and when bits of cold got hold of me, why, my spirits did much towards helping them off again. Spirit, sir, is everything! Did I go to bed during the day? Never! I could not afford the time; for I had my shop to mind. You look surprised; but I told you at the beginning that I kept a shop. See you; I did not know how long my husband might linger; and then I was so wrapped up in my poor lad, that I determined he should be a doctor or a lawyer, or something smarter than a tradesman; so, having a good long day before me, I resolved upon opening a shop of some kind.

'I was a time in deciding on what I should deal in. I dreaded giving credit; and as there are some things which women are not in the habit of buying on *tick*—somehow they never think of that when they really want them—I resolved to deal in them. So I hit upon selling black-lead, blacking, brushes of various kinds, even pots and pans; for I noticed that when a woman sent for such things she sent the money for them. Besides, I saw that a matter of ten pounds or so would start me in that line; I saw that there would be little perishable stock or articles that would go out of fashion; nor would the business call for a deal of learning or knowledge to manage it—things which I had not; so into that line I went.

'At first I managed to make my cottage do for my shop; the bedroom and cellar I made into the warehouse; then as the trade increased I took the house next to the one I had, and made it into shop and warehouse. Rent and taxes, you know, were not heavy items. I began this business after I had done knocking-up about five years, and ended it about six years ago.

'No; I did not give up because I was tired of work. But I saw that I had enough to live upon, and' (here her voice fell into a low key, and assumed a plaintive tone) 'I had no one belonging me to live for; for my husband had been long dead, and my poor son had been taken from me. Did I sell my business? No; I did not sell either business. There was a poor man, a neighbour, who fell out of work; and as he had a large family, and was running from bad to worse at his shop every week, I just handed over the knocking-up to him; and a good thing it has been for him, you may be sure. And as for the other concern, why, I just let my customers spread themselves among other shops as they thought fit.

'Did I make many bad debts in the knocking-up business? Not many; less than you would suppose. But for one thing, I looked pretty sharp after my money. It took some gathering in,

though. I got paid mostly on a Saturday afternoon and night. Some called and paid me as they passed my house; others left it with those appointed by me to receive it. One way or other, I got most of it week by week. To those who began to be dilatory in paying me, I just gave a hint that if they did not pay up that week-end I would let them overlie themselves a morning now and again. This put them into fear; for they knew they would lose a deal more by being 'quartered' once at the mill than they had to pay me for a whole week's knocking-up. So I had few who did not pay up old scores. Of course I leave out of account some I did not care to press for payment—men with large families, or men who had had a fit of sickness or the like, or a poor delicate woman. But let that pass; they might have done the same by me.

'Yes; a knocker-up has a good chance of finding out the tempers of his customers. Bless you! I soon got to know who were surly and who were pleasant folks; who were short-tempered and who had long tempers. You know, when knocking-up began to be a regular trade we used to rap or ring at the doors of our customers. But there were two objections to this way of rousing them: one from the public, the other from the knocker-up. The public complained of being disturbed, especially if sickness was in a house, by our loud rapping or ringing; and the knocker-up soon found out that while he knocked up one who paid him, he knocked up several on each side who did not pay; so we were not long in inventing the fishing-rod-like wands which are now used. Ay indeed, the knocker-up has a wand of office. I was among the first who adopted rods. So now a few taps on the bedroom window, which no one hears but those who should, are sufficient.

'A surly or hot-tempered fellow would growl or knock things about as he came to the window to reply, and his responding rap would sound as peevish as possible; but a good-tempered man, ah it used to be quite pleasant and cheering to get him out of bed; for you could hear from his very tread that he was grateful even, and his reply-tap sounded quite musical; and when he spoke and bade you good-morning, it was really encouraging. I have been inclined at times to knock some men up for nothing, just because it was pleasant to hear them, especially after you had had two or three of the other kind to deal with. I have given over knocking some fellows up for no other reason than that they were sulky or angry at being disturbed. There was one man in particular: he was a little, slender, ill-featured man, who always reminded me of a weasel; he had to be up at five o'clock; he was given to drink, by the way; so that he was not only hard to awaken, but he never came to the window but he indulged in angry mutterings, and I heard at times an oath slip out of his mouth. He was a shilling-a-week customer, and paid regularly; but I was so plagued by his temper and insulting ways, that at last I gave him up as a bad job.

'You are right, sir; a knocker-up really deserves the gratitude of his customers. They should not think he is compensated when he gets their money. Only think: he has to be out of his warm bed in all weathers; and must not let a bit of tic or tooth-warch keep him at home. But they can sleep on the night through, in peace and content,

because they are sure to hear his taps on their window at the right time. Really, I'm sure nobody can think a knocker-up is a selfish man, or for that part of it, a selfish woman. Why, no money is so well spent as that which is paid to the profession; and I believe most who pay it think so.

'I knocked up for years two young women who were sisters. They had been left orphans when very young; but poor things, they stuck together, went to the mill, saved their earnings, and at last took and furnished a room. They got me to knock them up; for you see they kept their own little spot clean and tidy, and mended their own things at night; and they went to bed tired and often late; so they slept heavy. Well, as I've said, I knocked them up for years. They would not let me do it for nothing; no, not even now and again. One or the other had always a "Good-morning," or "How are you this morning, Mrs Waters?" in a low kind tone for me. And about once a quarter they would have me spend a Sunday evening with them and take a cup of tea; and if any folks were grateful it was these girls.

'When did I get my sleep, do you ask? I'll tell you. I always went to bed at nine o'clock every night, except Saturday night; and having a tired body and a contented mind, I was not long in dropping asleep. And I was up again at half-past two to the minute; for my first customer lived a good twenty minutes' walk from my house, and you know he had to be awakened at three o'clock. Well, for some time I had no one else to arouse until four o'clock, so I generally came home. Before I went out in winter I got a cup of tea, so I kept the fire in; but in summer I let it go out, and did not care to light it again until I came back from the early customer. Then I always made my poor husband a cup of tea, after which he slept better than in the fore-part of the night. You see he had to awaken me; for being young and very active during the day, I slept soundly. But what between him and the alarm, I never over-slept myself; no, not even once. But after I had been about six or seven years at the job, I got to awaken quite naturally like. It was well I did; for when my husband died, I had no longer him to depend on.

'Yes; the worst weather for a knocker-up is wet weather. Oh, it was trying to one's patience, to say nothing of one's health, to be pelted with rain and wind. Then when the streets were filled with snow-broth it was anything but pleasant. But I always tried to think of the good I was doing. What a wonderful help it was to think that way! Why, I found out that even a chimney-sweep or a sweeper of our streets would be happy in his calling if he only took such a view of his work, instead of comparing it with such as a clergyman's. Why, sir, we are all helping one another as well as earning our livings when we follow our lawful callings. But it was extra nice on a fine spring or summer morning; I used to be happy all over on such mornings.

'You would like me to say something about my son. To tell the truth, sir, I seldom feel willing to talk about him; for when I've been led out to talk about him, my dear lad, it has taken many a day to get his image out of my mind.'

I here besought Mrs Waters not to go on with the story, but she did. It was interesting and touching

in some of its details; but as it would not be relevant to the leading subject of this paper, I refrain from relating it. I heard her tell, both then and afterwards, several incidents of great interest; but as my paper is quite long enough already, I must omit them.

*Note.*—Since the writer of the above article had his conversations with Mrs Waters, he had a long talk with a civil but illiterate man whom he fell in with during a journey by rail. It came out that he got his living chiefly by knocking-up, having over eighty regular customers, from whom he obtained on an average twenty-eight shillings a week. This was in a town six miles from the scene of Mrs Waters' toils. But like most other money-making avocations, this one has become over-run with competitors, as is evident from the fact that the writer meets in his short early morning walk into the town at least half a dozen knockers-up of both sexes; so that few are now, he believes, so fortunate as either the man above named, or Mrs Waters.

### THE ADMIRAL'S SECOND WIFE.

#### CHAPTER XIV.—THROUGH THE GRIM GATES.

FIVE wretched days pass, and Katie hardly knows how they go, for she counts time only by the arrival of the mail-bag. Yet no letter has come from Sir Herbert, and she is almost distracted. Has he really set her free? cast her off? And will he never again come, or send, or speak?

The great house is growing silent and gloomy beyond measure. Though the daily routine of work and attendance goes on as usual, there is a change, and Katie sees it. Servants are beginning to talk; a rumour spreads among them that the Admiral is to be superseded, and that the establishment in Government House will soon be broken up. Perhaps they have gleaned this from the newspapers, which are making very free with Sir Herbert's name just now. They jest at his clumsiness, his mismanagement, and his blunder; they wonder whether he has fallen into dotage. They marvel how a man in his sober senses could send such a miserable craft as the *Leoni* to sea in a storm. Indeed she would have become a total wreck had not the *Leo* while making for the Short Reefs discovered her far out of her course, tossing about on a cross sea, her rudder broken, her decks flooded with water, and her crew in a rampant state of disorder. The old ship was fast going to her doom, like a great blundering unmanageable sea-monster; when the *Leo* took her in tow and brought her into harbour.

On the evening of this fifth day, Katie watches till the last post comes in, till the last train has stopped, and there is no longer any chance of hearing from or seeing her husband that night. Then her powers of endurance fail; waiting becomes agony, her punishment seems greater than she can bear. The silence is killing her; she feels as if she must go mad, or die. Her brain throbs so wildly, her mind is in such tumult, that she is hardly responsible for her actions. She rushes up to her room, puts on an outdoor dress, and with her veil

closely drawn over her face, is only conscious she must flee from the house. It is so quiet, so lonely; the very atmosphere suffocates her.

'I will go home to my mother; she will pity me, and calm my burning brow with her cool soft hand,' is her thought, as she almost runs across the hall and out of the door. She never notices the night is cold, that long white icicles are hanging from the trees, and that the ground is hard and frozen. She sees not the stars glittering down at her with their clear holy eyes; nor does she observe the grave questioning looks of the sentries as they notice the Admiral's wife flee out of the gates alone at that late hour.

A strange contrast that silent stealthy departure, to Katie's triumphant entry through those very gates not twelve months ago. Her reign in Government House has been short, its termination sudden and inglorious, for she is doomed never to enter the stately portals again. She walks rapidly on through the streets, shivering, but not from the keen air, for her whole frame is in a burning fever, and the chill breeze feels like a blast from a blazing furnace. Soon Katie is standing on the threshold of the well-known room in the old house, scaring all the inmates with her wan face and wild looks. Mrs Grey is at her side in a moment.

'Katie, my child, what's the matter? Are you ill?'

'Mother, mother! I have come home to you again. Don't send me away, I entreat you. Herbert has left me, deserted me!'

In another moment she is on a stool at her mother's feet, with her face buried in her lap, sobbing a wild resistless storm of tears. Mr Grey, with his spectacles raised on his forehead, looks down on his child curiously. He would begin questioning her at once, but his wife cautions him to silence till the burst of tears abates and the sobs become fewer.

'Katie, what's all this about?'

'Herbert is gone! I shall never see him again!'

'Surely nothing has happened to the Admiral? Be calm, child, and tell me what all this means.'

'He went to London, father.'

'I know. He wrote to me on his arrival there.'

'But he went away in anger; parted from me never to return.'

'Katie, I can't understand you. Compose yourself, and explain.'

Lady Dillworth recognises the voice of authority so potent in the old days, and yields to it by passively producing the Admiral's letter. Her father's brow clouds as he reads it over, and there is stinging contempt in his voice as he exclaims: 'So, my Lady Dillworth, you have been flirting with Walter Reeves again!'

Katie is on her feet in an instant, and confronts him with eyes that flash through her tears.

'I have done nothing of the sort, father; that is all a mistake. What do you take me for? I am Sir Herbert's wife, remember.'

'Then how am I to understand this letter?'

Katie explains. She does not attempt to shield herself, nor hide any single particular; and her father softens when he finds she has been more thoughtless than intentionally culpable. Still he speaks out his mind, and says with a husky voice that trembles with emotion: 'A short time ago I



gave my daughter to a brave good man, whose only fault was over-indulgence; and before the end of one short year, I find she has grieved him with her folly, injured him with her thoughtlessness, and finally driven him from his home.—Now, don't interrupt me, Katie. Have you ever read of the foolish woman that "plucketh down her house with her hands?" You have done that.'

The room is silent, except for Helen's sobs. Katie stands like one frozen to marble while her father heaps reproaches on her head. She feels she has given cause for them, and raising her hands with passionate eagerness, exclaims: 'Help me, help me, father! Tell me what I can do. I would give my very life to set things right again.'

Mr Grey shakes his head gravely. 'Such things are not so easily mended, Katie. The first step will be for you to return home and wait there till your husband comes.'

But here Mrs Grey interposes. With a mother's keen discernment, she sees Katie is on the very verge of distraction; a more prolonged pressure, and the brain must give way. She pleads for her daughter.

'Let Katie stay here to-night, dear. She needs rest and nursing; and there are none but servants in that great lonely house.'

'And a pretty scandal those same servants will give forth, when they tell all over Seabright to-morrow how their mistress ran away from her home.'

'Go to them, dear. You can stop their tongues. I tremble for Katie if she returns there to-night,' whispers Mrs Grey hurriedly in her husband's ear; and her persuasion prevails.

Mr Grey arrives at Government House just in time. He finds the whole place in confusion, every one looking impatiently for the mistress, and wondering where she can have gone so late. Hunter is more alarmed than any of the others, though he tries to assure them there is nothing wrong. He has seen through some of the late household events, and knows that Lady Dillworth, with her pale face and restless eyes, has been on the verge of despair for a long time past. So he feels a sense of relief when Mr Grey comes in, with a voice of authority that scatters suspicion to the winds.

'Lady Dillworth is at my house, and her mother has prevailed on her to stay there to-night. Hunter, you can bring over the mail-bag in the morning; and tell Hannah to pack up a few things for her Ladyship's use, in time for her to dress to-morrow.' So the servants are pacified; and Seabright is cheated of its scandal.

No more reproaches fall on Katie after her father's departure. Though they cannot banish her sorrow, Helen and her mother soothe her despair with the touch of loving hands, the sound of sympathising voices. There is rest and relief in their affection, and Katie grows calm, despite her self-reproach.

By-and-by Mrs Grey leads her up to the little bedroom that was hers before her marriage, and ere long she is nestling among the snowy pillows, weeping and praying for her husband—and herself.

## CHAPTER XV.—NEWS AT LAST.

Katie must have slept, for towards morning she dreams she is out on the Short Reefs, and sees the

*Daring* go down with her husband, father, and all her household on board. They glare at her with accusing eyes, and call her 'Fiend, murderess!' So it is a relief to start up and find it was all a dream. In the dim gray light she sees a figure all in white by her bedside, and is ready to shriek with fright, till she discovers it is only her mother in her white dressing-gown, with a lamb's-wool shawl over her shoulders. Mrs Grey has been watching, in and out of the room nearly all night, and now she bends over and kisses her daughter. I have good news for you, Katie.'

'O mother, what is it? Has Sir Herbert come back?'

'Not yet, dear. The news is, that the poor sailors supposed to have been lost in the *Daring's* cutter are not drowned after all. An outward-bound vessel picked them up and took them on to Havre. They returned here safe and well this morning, so there has not been a single life lost.'

'Thank God for that!' exclaims Katie reverently, with clasped hands; and never was ejaculation more heartfelt.

'Yes, He is very merciful; we must trust Him more, Katie.'

'Mother, I have even doubted His mercy sometimes! In my misery, I thought even *He* had turned against me; but those wretched feelings are past now, and if Herbert would come back, even happiness might return to us again.'

There are many letters in the mail-bag that morning, but Lady Dillworth lays them all aside—only one interests her, and that bears the Hayes Hill post-mark. 'This is from Laura Best; perhaps there is news of Herbert in it.' Katie opens the envelope with trembling hands, glances at the contents, and exclaims: 'Herbert is ill—lying ill at Laura's, and she has written to summon me down there.'

The particulars are soon made known. The Admiral went to Hayes Hill on his return journey from London, and as soon as he arrived there, was stricken down with sudden illness. He had shewn no sign of recovery up to the present, and Laura's letter was most urgent.

'I must go to Herbert at once. Oh, why did he go there in his time of sickness and danger? When he felt the attack coming on, why didn't he come back to me?'

'Ah, why indeed?' echoes Mr Grey gravely, as he folds up his papers and locks his desk.

Soon all is bustle and preparation. Mr Grey hurries everybody half out of their wits in his anxiety to be in time for the next train to Hayes Hill. He has decided on going down there with Katie, and says he will not leave her till he sees her once more under the same roof with her husband. Lady Dillworth's boxes are sent to the station direct from Government House; and she and her father are soon speeding on their way as rapidly as the swift locomotive can take them. It is a cold misty day, and Katie glances out on the dreary country with a listless eye and a heart as dreary as the scene. She fears that after all she may be too late to see her husband alive; and even if he is living, she wonders whether he will forgive her, or again turn from her with that sorrowful look of reproach.

At last they reach their destination, and are soon driving up the lane to Hayes Hill in Laura's brougham. Though the twilight is fast gathering,

Katie sees the house is a long low one, built of red brick, and in bungalow fashion. Robert Best had it erected in that form as a souvenir of his early days in India. With a show of eastern exterior, it yet contains every possible comfort and luxury our colder climate needs. It is a residence that bears more sign of convenience than style.

The entrance-hall is large, and brightly lighted up, and Katie feels dizzy as her father leads her in from the cold outer air. A silence as of death reigns in the house—even the slim youth who opens the door speaks in a subdued whisper. Perhaps it is all over!

'O Herbert, my darling!' repeats Katie to herself, and her heart gives a wild throb, and then seems to grow still and cold. She cannot frame the question she longs to ask; but Mr Grey inquires at once.

'How is the Admiral now?'

'Much the same, sir. Two doctors are with him at present.'

The page throws open the door of a room on one side of the hall. Laura's sitting-room evidently, for her work is lying on the table, also her desk, on which is a half-written letter. Presently, a light step is heard, and Mrs Best comes running in with outstretched hands. There is no question of jealousy or restraint now. Laura clasps her father's wife in her arms and kisses her tenderly.

'Oh, I am glad you are come! I feared you would be too late.'

'Is he dying? Is my husband—dying?' Katie inquires with a sob.

'He is very ill. But you must be calm, and help me to nurse him. He has been repeating your name so often!'

'Has he really asked for me? Oh, I am so thankful!'

'Perhaps not asking exactly, for his mind is unsettled. At one time he mentions your name with the tenderest epithets; at another he talks of you in a strange wild way, very painful to hear.'

'I wonder whether he will know me?'

'We will see when the doctors have finished their consultation.'

Ere long, poor Katie, leaning on Laura's arm, enters Sir Herbert's room, and there she once more sees her husband's face.

What a change one short week has made! There is nothing but a flushed fevered countenance, restless wandering eyes, parched lips, and throbbing brow, for her to gaze on. She might have been the veriest stranger for all the recognition she gets.

Laura whispers softly: 'Don't be startled, dear. He is not conscious now; but when he wakes up to reason again, he will be so glad to have you near him.'

But many days pass before that. It is a case of long nursing, of long nights of watching, and weary hours of doubt and anxiety. Through it all, Mrs Best is so earnest, so tender-hearted, so unselfish, that Lady Dillworth finds herself wondering over and over again how she ever could have disliked her so much in the old days gone by. All her petty airs, her studied affectations have vanished; she looks a pale anxious woman, with traces of watching and weariness in her face. Her dress is studiously plain—a deep gray in colour, and of some soft noiseless material, whose folds do not rustle or creak as she moves about the sick-room.

Her voice is low and gentle, her words wise and hopeful, and the poor heart-broken wife clings to her for help and sympathy—and not in vain. Days pass on. Mr Grey returns home to wind up his affairs, for his secretaryship expires with the Admiral's resignation; but he promises to return to Hayes Hill again, on the shortest notice, if needed. Wife and daughter take turns of watching beside Sir Herbert, sharing each other's anxieties and hopes.

The best hours of Katie's life now are those she spends by the Admiral's side in that still room. She seats herself in the arm-chair, places the lamp so that its rays may fall faintly on her husband's face, and then watches the familiar features, the high forehead, and wonders whether those lips will ever again talk to her of love and speak forgiveness. She would fain fling herself on his breast and press her lips on his, fevered as they are; but she dares not till he himself shall have called her to him again. And so she sits there musing, hoping, praying. Come what will, Lady Dillworth will never again be the vain, selfish, frivolous, thoughtless woman she once was. Laura's society is working her good; there is a softness and sweetness in her manner never before visible.

One bright afternoon in spring, Lady Dillworth has taken up her position by the bedside. She can watch the invalid, and with a turn of her head can glance at Laura and her boys, who are in the grounds outside the window. The scene out there is calm and pleasant. A sloping lawn extends almost down to the river, on which some water-fowl are lazily floating. Beyond the river rises a grove of trees, now fast unfolding their tender green buds and drooping tassels. Laura's boys are bright, golden-haired, blue-eyed little fellows, lively as butterflies, and just as restless. They flit in and out the shrubbery, gathering violets for Lady Dillworth. Presently they bring her a bunch, and she stands at the bedside with them in her hand. But what is this that arrests her? A change has come over her husband's face, so remarkable that she holds her breath with sudden awe. Is it the portent of death?—the settling of the features into the calm repose that proclaims life's warfare over?

The haggard anxious expression has quite vanished; he seems to sleep quietly as a child. A soft glow steals over his cheeks, then his eyes open, and he looks up with that smile she knows so well.

'Katie, my wife! are you here? I have had a frightful dream.'

'The dream is over now, Herbert.'

'Then it is not true that you are weary of me and longing for freedom?'

'No, Herbert. I have not grown weary. Never were you as precious as you are now! Darling! darling! say you forgive me, and love me still.' Her eyes are full of tears, and she sinks down beside him.

'What was it about Walter Reeves? He has been troubling my thoughts and driving me mad,' Sir Herbert repeats musingly.

'Walter Reeves is not in England now; he is gone to Italy with his wife. Liddy Delmere and he were married a fortnight ago.'

'Come nearer, my pet; come nearer me, Katie, my wife! Let me feel your kiss on my lips once more. Oh, I have been nearly heart-broken, nearly dead; but hope is returning. The strong

arm of Mercy has brought me back to life again; and I feel as if there is happiness in store for us still.'

Laura Best comes in ere long, and finds Katie still kneeling beside the bed, her hands clasped in her husband's, and the light of fond affection glowing from her eyes as she looks tenderly into his. The bed is bestrewn with early violets, for Katie has flung down her flowers in her agitation, and the perfume is filling the room like a soft breath from the garden. Laura is not one whit calmer than Katie; she kisses her father, and weeps tears of joy, and feels he is given back to them from the very grasp of death. Marvellous to relate, all this flutter and excitement does not injure Sir Herbert or throw him back. Life has returned to him in too full strength for that. The delight of reunion, the joy of returned confidence in Katie, is like a draught of some invigorating potion to his heart, and from that hour he speedily recovers. All his doubts and distrust are over; all Katie's frivolity and worldliness have fled. They begin a new and more complete life together. True, the rest of the Admiral's days are doomed to be spent in retirement; as years pass by, he sees younger men stepping into the post he should have occupied, and gaining honours he once hoped to win.

True, he misses the full deep draught of power, the very taste of which had been sweet to him. Katie too has lost the brilliant colouring that once lit up her path; but neither of them repines at the change. Though Admiral Sir Herbert Dillworth's flag no longer flutters at the mast-head, and though his wife no longer leads the fashions, they are happy, with a higher, purer happiness than they ever knew in the days they spent at Government House.

THE END.

### THE MAFIA AND CAMORRA.

THESE are two Italian words of evil import. They signify confederacies of villains of all ranks in society who live by exacting black-mail on traders. Our occasional observations on the proceedings of these illegal associations, as also on the system of brigandage in Sicily, have been somewhat trying to certain Italian journalists. They do not absolutely deny the existence of these social disorders, but speak of them as insignificant, and are shocked that they should be made a matter of comment among strangers. We are willing to believe that our remarks, like those of others, drawn from authoritative reports, have done some good, and certainly no harm. The comments of the English press may have a salutary effect in curing evils which the native press of Italy fears almost to touch upon. Vast numbers of English travel in Italy—some of them residing for a season on the score of health—and all stand in need of protection from petty extortions and robbery. If the Italian government be unable to give the degree of security which is claimed by peaceable foreigners, it is at least desirable that the English who venture abroad should be made aware of the vexatious exactions and impediments which probably await them. In our last notice on this subject, we stated pretty plainly that the ordinary course of justice in Italy, and more specially in Sicily, was seemingly unable to quell the disorders

here referred to, and that nothing short of prompt military execution would avail. For what signifies the paltry process of capturing and imprisoning a few disturbers of the peace, and then shortly setting them free, to carry on their robberies and murders as usual? If the southern provinces of Italy are to cease to be a disgrace to civilisation, the true remedy must consist in the ready appeal to a court-martial, speedily followed by execution.

As if at length stung by the remonstrances of English newspaper writers, the government of Italy have latterly shewn increased vigour in the attempt to extirpate brigandage in Sicily, with, we are told, good results; and now they are to all appearance resolved on striking a blow at the Camorra in Naples. We are made acquainted with the fact by *The Times*; and should any English journal specially deserve praise for its denunciations of the scandalous manner in which travellers in Italy are liable to be annoyed by the misconduct of officials, it is that paper, which through its correspondents is able to offer instructive accounts regarding the illegal and hitherto almost unchecked Italian associations. Its Naples correspondent, under date September 4, writes as follows; it being only necessary to premise for inexperienced readers, that while *Camorra* is the name of the association, *Camorrista* signifies a member who participates in its gains—plural *Camorristi*:

'The resolute attempt which is at last being made to destroy that organised criminal association known as the Camorra is the all-absorbing interest of the Southerners. Its long existence and its vast number of crimes are matters of history. Thriving under despotic governments, and later still under political complications, it has recently raised its head again, and has brought down upon it all the strength of the police. *Razzia* after *razzia* has been made on the body, and during the last sixteen or seventeen years, hundreds, perhaps thousands, have been seized and sent off to the islands, only to return and renew their operations; but one day this week a blow was struck which reflects great credit on the energy and courage of the Questor. The Camorra is a noxious weed which is to be found everywhere and among all classes of society; but it flourishes especially in the markets, where its agents tax every article of food, arrange the prices, and then leave with their pockets full of their ill-gotten profits. On one of these markets, therefore, an attack was made on Thursday morning. The ground had been well examined before, and twenty or thirty guards in plain clothes were sent early to mingle in a crowd of about two thousand persons, and watch the mode of conducting business. First comes in a peasant or *cafoni*, as the *Pungolo*, adopting the common term, calls him. He is laden with the produce of his land—fruit and vegetables—and the Camorrista presents himself and demands his tax of deposit. It is paid without dispute, as it has been for time out of mind. The *cafoni* of course wishes to sell his goods, but is unable to do so until the Camorrista settles the price and takes his part, which is given without dispute. The purchaser, the man who retails his goods in the streets of Naples, on his over-laden donkey, then comes on the scene; but he cannot carry off his goods without paying the Camorrista a

few sous for portage, he himself at last being compelled to be his own porter. Now this is what happened last Thursday in the market of St Anna della Paludi. It is what occurs in every market, every street, every corner of Naples, and what has happened from time immemorial. St Anna was the spot then fixed on for a determined attack last Thursday. Besides the guards in plain clothes, the market had been surrounded early in the morning by police and carabinieri, while a tolerably strong force of Bersaglieri was in attendance close at hand. On a sudden every gate and way of exit was closed, and the guards came down on the astonished people. Flight or resistance was out of the question; and the end of the matter was that fifty-seven of the most notorious of the order were netted, bound together by a long rope, and surrounded by the public force, carried off to the nearest police station. An immense crowd, consisting of their relatives and associates, had collected; but no attempt at rescue was made, for things had been admirably arranged, and the public force was too strong to allow of any such attempt being made without danger. At the station they were soon committed and sent off to prison in parties of ten; and a glance was sufficient to shew of what different conditions they were composed. There was the Picciotto (the novice of the order), without shoes and in his shirt sleeves; and the full-blown Camorrista dressed as a gentleman, with his fingers covered with rings, and a gold chain round his neck. After a long series of crimes the Picciotto may hope to attain the dignity of this rank, which insures him who holds it ease and comparative wealth. Such a man seldom appears on the scene; he is one of the directors—one of the wire-pullers, and many a wire has he pulled which has cost the life of an opponent. I may instance two cases—that of our unfortunate countryman, Mr Hind, and lately of the man called Borelli; but the annals of blood in this province, if examined, would furnish an incredibly large number of such cases.

The *razzia* in the market of St Anna della Paludi was followed on Saturday by another in the fish-market, with like success. This spot lies on the Marina, *en route* to the railway, and the space between the two places has long been celebrated for the robberies committed on carriages conveying strangers to and from the railway. Here every morning are brought in fish from all parts of the bay, consigned to the contractors, who again supply the retail dealers. A good business, therefore, is to be done by the Camorrista in this place; and no wonder is it that it should be thronged with men of that class and thieves. The same operations are performed which I have already described. The right to land is paid for; then the price of the fish is settled, and a certain percentage demanded and paid. Last of all, as in the fruit and vegetable market, the retail dealer has his accounts to settle. These claims have never been disputed—they are sanctioned by usage; and dangerous would it be to resist a secret organisation of ruffians who stick at nothing to maintain their "rights" and inflict vengeance. On this market an attack was made on Saturday, and fifty-nine of the worst characters were netted, there being, as before, a considerable display of the public force. An attempt was made also to arrest some of these fellows at the entrance of the Bourse,

who drive a trade in defrauding poor widows and orphans and getting possession of the certificates of their pensions. Three only were taken, as others who had got scent of the pursuit made themselves scarce.

'An Italian friend suggests that the only sure mode of doing away with the Camorra would be to sink Naples under the sea for half an hour, which would be about as practicable as the proposition to drive the Turks out of Europe. If it cannot be destroyed, it may, however, be checked by such *razzias* as we have had of late; but they must be repeated continually. Only two days after the scene of Thursday, some Camorristi presented themselves in the fruit-market and made the usual demand, which was resisted, and the fellows were arrested. The wives too of those who were seized by the police made their appearance, alleging that they were commissioned by their husbands to receive their dues. They too were arrested. From this it is evident that so long as one filament remains, the disease will spread, and that it is the constant application of the knife alone which will eradicate it. It is of good augury, however, that something like resistance was shewn to the demands of the "order." As in Sicily, in the case of brigandage, the consciousness of support and protection from the authorities inspired courage; and it is on the union of these two elements that we must depend for the effectual destruction of this enormous evil. But it will not suffice to lay hold only of the smaller fry; there are men, I am assured, who drive about in their carriages, enriched by the Camorra, and many we meet with no ostensible means of existence, decked out, as I have described, with gold chains and rings.'

Splendidly dressed fellows 'with gold chains and rings!' Such are the *élite* of a gang which for generations has dishonestly preyed on every department of trade in Naples—unauthorisedly exacting a percentage on every transaction under threat of the most dreadful penalties. One is glad to hear of the foregoing *razzias* on the confederacy; but from what we know of administrative justice in Italy, as well as of the utter rottenness of society and universal disposition to baffle the operations of the magistracy, the chances are that the captured Camorristi will soon be at large and at their old tricks. The civil law as it stands is incapable of dealing with this species of ingrained villainy. We have hinted at military repression by regular troops as the right course to pursue. W. C.

## NEARLY WRECKED.

IN FIVE CHAPTERS.

### CHAPTER I.—THE BETROTHAL.

'AND so, Mabel, Wilfred Merton has proposed to you?' The speaker, as he made this remark, laid down the paper which he had been reading, and looked across the room at its other occupant, who was standing in one of the windows chirping to a canary, and addressing it in that peculiar language which is commonly supposed to be gratifying to the feelings of the feathered tribe, however incomprehensible it may be to differently constructed beings.

Mabel hearing herself spoken to, turned round,



and leaving the bird to its own meditations, came to the table, which was laid for breakfast.

'Yes, papa,' she said, beginning to pour out the tea as she spoke; 'and what is more, I have accepted him.'

'Indeed! You didn't think it necessary then, to ask my permission in the matter?'

'Well, you see I'm afraid I rather took that for granted, and so did not think it necessary to ask for it beforehand. And then too you know Wilfred and I have always meant to marry one another some day, and that it really doesn't make any very great difference whether we call ourselves engaged or not.'

'Oh, you have always intended it, have you? May I ask how long "always" has been in this case?'

'Well, do you know, dear papa, I think we first settled it quite definitely when we were five, when Wilfred gave me the ring out of a wire button as an engagement ring,' answered Mabel, smiling brightly.

'That is a long time ago certainly; and I must congratulate you upon the constancy that you have both shewn in the matter. But don't you think that as it has gone on in this way very happily for such a long time, it might go on in the same way still without any more binding arrangement?'

'O no, papa; we want to have it admitted that we are engaged now.'

'But why, my dear? I thought you said a minute ago that it doesn't make any real difference whether you are engaged or not?'

'Of course I meant to other people, not to ourselves.'

'I should have myself thought your remark was a sword that cut both ways,' said Mr Colherne, smiling at his daughter's explanation. 'But I really don't see that it will do you any particular good to be engaged yet,' he went on more gravely; 'it seems to me that it is only tying you down without any positive advantage.'

'I don't care so very much for it myself,' answered Mabel, looking more serious than she had done yet, as she spoke; 'but Wilfred wishes it so much, and I wish it for his sake. You see he hasn't such an indulgent father as you are darling, or such a happy home as I have; and he says it will make him so much happier to feel that I am really his, and admitted to be so.'

'Well, my child, I suppose you will have your own way in this as you have in most things, you spoilt young monkey! But you can hardly expect me to feel very much elated by the idea that I shall have to get on some day without my Queen Mab.'

'O papa, now you are looking forward a long way! Why, we don't dream of being married yet, and shan't for ages.'

'This is by no means the first time that that remark has been made, for the consolation and encouragement of unfortunate fathers, who have nevertheless found themselves left alone before very long.'

'But then you know even when I do marry I don't mean to be separated from you. Of course you will always live with us.'

'And feel myself constantly in the way,' said

Mr Colherne, more gravely than he had yet spoken. 'No, my pet,' he went on almost sadly; 'it is the fate of parents to lose their children just when they have learnt to love them most, and I mustn't expect to escape the common lot.'

Mabel went to him and kissed his forehead. 'Come, papa, don't be sad just now; you will make me feel a nasty selfish creature for ever thinking of marrying Wilfred or anybody else.'

'I'm sure I don't want to do that, my queen,' replied her father cheerfully. 'But to return to our original subject. What is there in this Wilfred Merton that makes him so particularly attractive?'

'What a question to ask me, papa! There's everything about him. In the first place, he's so handsome!'

'Well, do you know I think he's very much like everybody else? It seems to me, to quote your favourite Humpty Dumpty, that he has "two eyes so, nose in the middle, mouth under." I must confess that he does not strike me as very remarkable.'

'O papa! everybody thinks him good-looking; and I believe in reality you do too, only you are so fond of teasing me. And then he is so clever!'

'I don't know that "everybody" will agree with you there, at all events. The public do not seem to think him so very clever!'

'Ah, but they will some day, when they have their eyes open, and have seen more of his paintings. But I didn't mean clever in his profession only; he says such clever things.'

'Which means, I suppose, that he says he is very fond of you; eh, Mab?' said her father, pinching her ear as he spoke. Then seeing that she did not seem inclined to reciprocate his lively manner, he went on: 'Never mind what I say, my darling; I can't help being a little jealous of the fellow that proposes taking you from me some day. But as I suppose you must be taken away by somebody sooner or later, I would rather it were Wilfred than anybody else, for I believe him to be a good fellow at heart, and honestly fond of you. I must say too, that it is decidedly a recommendation in my eyes, that as he has not a penny, he will not be able to take you till "later." But I must be off now, my child; I am dreadfully late as it is; you see you have kept me talking so, that I have not noticed the time. Good-bye, Queen Mab; take care of yourself while I am away. But I daresay you will have somebody to help you to do that,' he added mischievously as he kissed his pet and left the room.

Mr Colherne and his daughter were living in a house towards the West End of London. He had been a widower for some years, and Mabel was his housekeeper and companion. He was justly proud of his child, and thought her and everything she did, perfection; and Mabel returned this love with all she could spare from Wilfred.

Mabel Colherne was by no means a beauty. Her eyes were not of the dark flashing order that thrills everybody at whom they look; nor were they of that soft melting kind that infuses tenderness into the most unimpressible at the first glance; roses and lilies had nothing to fear from her complexion as a rival to their charms. Sculptors could have looked at her nose and mouth without feeling the slightest desire to reproduce them in marble; and her throat would not have been

remarked upon as swan-like. But she was a thoroughly honest, healthy, happy looking English girl; and saying *that*, is equivalent to something very pleasant to look at. She looked particularly bright and happy now as she bustled about the room, performing various little acts of household arrangement; humming snatches of airs as she went about her business, and stopping at intervals to continue the conversation with the canary, which had been interrupted before breakfast. Suddenly she stopped in the middle of her avocations as the knocker sounded, and a look of merry mischief coming over her face, she got close behind the door of the room, so that when it was opened she would be hidden. Knowing well whose knock it was, she could not resist the temptation of teasing Wilfred by concealing herself. This might perhaps be considered a somewhat undignified way of receiving a young gentleman who was coming to the house for the first time in his new capacity of an accepted lover; but in extenuation of Mabel's conduct it must be remarked that she and Wilfred Merton had known one another intimately ever since they were children, and that their engagement made but little difference to them.

She had hardly more than time to ensconce herself behind the door when Wilfred opened it and came a little way into the room. He seemed a good deal surprised to find the room empty, as Mabel's habits were very methodical and regular, and he was generally sure of finding her here at this time; and was just on the point of going away again to look for her elsewhere, when a suppressed laugh fell upon his ear, and looking round at the place whence the sound came, he espied Mabel standing there. Shutting the door quickly, he pounced upon her, and seizing the maiden by the wrists, took a lover's revenge for her conduct in the shape of more kisses than one. She did not resist very vigorously, and suffered herself to be escorted to the sofa with a very tolerable grace.

'Well, Mabel,' Wilfred said, as he sat down by her side, 'have you told your father?'

'Yes, Wilfred,' she answered demurely.

'And what does he say?'

'Oh, he won't hear of our being engaged,' she said, speaking very solemnly.

A look of such blank disappointment and astonishment came over her lover's face, that Mabel burst out laughing. 'Why, you silly boy,' she said gaily, 'to take it in, and look so dreadfully unhappy! You don't suppose that I mean it, do you?'

'Well, you looked very grave as you spoke,' returned Wilfred, seeming half-disconcerted at having believed Mabel's nonsense; 'and I could not be quite sure that you were joking.'

'Solemn old fellow! Have you ever known papa say no to me when I wanted anything? And besides, was my reception of you of a kind to lead you to believe that I was feeling depressed?'

'Perhaps you wouldn't have felt depressed even if Mr Colherne had said no,' returned Wilfred in a misanthropical tone of voice.

'I'm not going to answer such nonsense as that seriously,' said Mabel; 'perhaps I shouldn't: most likely not, I think.'

'Then he has consented?'

'Of course he has, Wilfred.'

'My darling,' he said, drawing her closer to him, 'now that I know you are mine, I shall not feel unhappy any more!'

'Why, Wilfred, how gravely you speak, and how solemn you look. You are not a bit like your usual bright self this morning. What is the matter with you?'

'It's too bad of me to be out of sorts this morning, my pet, when I ought to be so happy; but I really can't help it. You must forgive me, Queen Mab.'

'But what is it makes you so, Wilfred, dear? Do tell me. You know you always do tell me your troubles; and I have more right to hear them now than ever. Besides, I can't bear being kept in the dark about things, especially when they concern you.'

'Oh, it's nothing very interesting or very new; only another row with the governor.'

'What about?'

'Nothing but a recapitulation of the old grievances; the same thing over again that we've been quarrelling about for I don't know how long—as to what a fool I've been to become an artist, instead of entering that detestable counting-house.'

'I suppose he did not describe it in that way,' Mabel could not help interrupting.

'I am so sick of it all, that I don't know what to do with myself,' Wilfred went on, without taking any notice of her remark.

'What led to the talk on the subject? Something, I suppose.'

'The fact that another picture has been refused admission. It's quite bad enough never to get any success, without his incessantly throwing it in my teeth. I declare I get so discouraged sometimes, I haven't the heart to work at all; and then that makes another trouble.'

'But you can't expect to meet with much success yet; you haven't had time. Almost everybody who has succeeded in the world has been unsuccessful at first.'

'Of course; I know that. But then it's so much easier to bear the fact that other people were disappointed, than it is to bear disappointment one's self. It is so much pleasanter to remember some great artist who wasn't appreciated at first, than it is to have one's own paintings perpetually refused admission everywhere. I feel so sure too that I have got the ability in me.'

'The greater reason for hoping and steadily persevering. But you know you have such a dreadful disadvantage to fight against in being so nearly self-taught as you are: you haven't started fair.'

'Of course not. I told my father so to-day when he was pitching into me; and it seemed to open up quite a new idea to him. He thought a little, and then said that he did not want to be responsible for my failing in the profession I had persisted in choosing—you see he takes my failing quite for granted,' Wilfred added bitterly—'and that if I intended working, he would send me to Paris for a year and pay for my studying there.'

'Wilfred! And are you going?'

'Really I hardly know. I think it is not knowing how to make up my mind about that, added to the bother of my father's everlasting grumbling, that has made me down so this morning. Of course I should very much like the advantage it would give me; but then comes the pang of parting from you, and particularly just now.'

'Does your father know that our engagement is settled?'

'Yes; I told him so.'

'And what does he think of it?'

'He says that it is ridiculous nonsense for me to be engaged to anybody; though of course he prefers you to any one else, as he likes you better than anybody. But darling,' he burst out passionately, 'don't mind what he or any one else thinks or says on the subject: my only chance of getting on and doing anything worth doing, is the certainty that I can think of you as mine!'

'You know, Wilfred, that my heart always has been yours, and that it always will be, whatever happens. But I wish Mr Merton had not suggested this Paris scheme; I don't like the idea of it.'

'You have only to command me to stay at home, Queen Mab, and I will throw every other consideration to the winds.'

'No; I don't wish that. Act as you would if you did not know me at all; I could not bear to feel that I had put any obstacle in the way of your success.'

Their talk during the rest of the time they were together was grave and sedate, quite unlike the usual conversation of two young lovers.

When Wilfred had gone, Mabel was more sad than she cared to admit; the interview seemed to have altered matters very materially.

#### CHAPTER II.—THE PARTING.

It was settled that Wilfred should go to Paris.

Mr Merton was a banker in a good position in London, and he had naturally wished Wilfred, who was his only child, to enter into his office and succeed him in his business. But unfortunately for his schemes, the boy had at an early age developed a strong taste for drawing, and this taste, which had been discouraged rather than fostered, had grown with his growth, until his father had been obliged to admit to himself that it was useless to try to coerce him, and that the lad must be allowed to take his own way. Giving in to an unavoidable necessity, and giving in to it gracefully, are, however, two very different things, and Mr Merton chose the former course. He allowed his son to become an artist, because he saw very clearly that he could do nothing else, but beyond that he did scarcely anything for him; with but scanty instruction, he was, as Mabel had said, very nearly self-taught.

Had Mrs Merton lived to see her boy grow up, things would have been no doubt on a very different footing between father and son; her influence would have been used to soften the disagreement between them; and a woman's influence is rarely ineffectual. But unhappily for them both, she had died when Wilfred was about ten years old; and he and his father were left to rub the angles of their natures against one another, without any one to round the angularity off.

And so it came to pass that when Mr Merton offered to send Wilfred to Paris, although there were many reasons for which the young man would have preferred remaining at home, he thought it would not do to refuse his father's offer, and so accepted it, and prepared for leaving home.

From the moment that this idea had been first communicated to Mabel, she had had a great and

unaccountably strong dislike to it; and now when it was resolved upon, and the time of Wilfred's going was drawing near, an excitable restless feeling came over her, that made her depressed and miserable. This depression so haunted her, that she could not help looking upon it as an omen and a warning.

She tried hard to repress this boding feeling, but in vain; and tried also, and with more success, to keep it from Wilfred's sight; but at last when the day of his departure had arrived, and he had come to say good-bye to her, she could restrain herself no longer, and to his surprise and dismay beseeched him to change his mind and remain at home!

'Why, Mabel, my darling,' he answered, clasping his hands round her waist as he spoke, and looking down fondly at her, 'what do you mean? You have never said a word against my going until now.'

'No; I have been trying not to think of it. But O Wilfred! I have such a strong feeling in my heart that some harm will come of your going; I have had it ever since you first spoke of it. Do stay.'

'You can't be well, my pet; it isn't like you to have such fancies.'

'I know it isn't; but I am quite well; and it is because I am not generally fanciful or nervous that I am so much impressed by the feeling I have now. Do listen to me.'

'My dearest,' said her lover, kissing the upturned face, 'it is too late to change my plans now. Shake off this fancy, my queen, for it is only a fancy. I like going so little myself, Mabel, that you mustn't make it more difficult to me.'

Mabel resolutely withheld herself from saying any more on the subject; but the feeling of dread that she could not explain was strong upon her still, and it was very hard to keep it to herself. When Wilfred left her she clung to him as though the parting were to be for ever; and when she found herself alone, the anticipation of evils to come came back with redoubled force.

#### CHANGE-RINGING.

THE frequent allusions to bells by our poets are directly conclusive to the strong attachment which binds these sounds to English ears. We all delight in listening to the merry peal, and yet notwithstanding our fondness for the same, and although all our days of rejoicing are considered incomplete without the ringing of bells, it is strange how very little is understood either of the art or science of what is termed change-ringing.

Ringling bells in changes is peculiar to England. When rung thus, the bells are necessarily rung 'up;' that is, each bell, by an arrangement of wheel and rope, is gradually swung until, after describing larger and larger arcs, it swings through a complete circle at each sound or stroke of the clapper. The swinging motion also materially increases the sweetness of the tone. When bells are rung in changes, each bell is brought to a balance after each revolution; and when the bell 'runs' well, very little actual strength is required, and the work, unless pro-

longed, is not so exhaustive as many suppose. In this as in many other things, it is more 'knack' than strength that is required. The tenor bell of the ring of twelve at St Saviour's, Southwark, weighs fifty-two hundredweight; and the wheel, in the grooves of which the rope for ringing it runs, is about nine feet in diameter; yet this ponderous bell with its huge gearing has often been rung by one man for four hours without rest, involving more than five thousand changes; and was once rung for six and a half hours by one man. This, however, was a great feat.

A number of bells hung together is called a 'ring,' the number generally varying from five to a dozen, which last is the greatest number that has yet been hung in a steeple. When the highest note—the treble bell—is sounded first, and followed by the consecutive notes until the deepest or 'tenor' bell is struck, the bells are said to be rung in 'rounds.' And it is worthy of remark that this is the order in which they are rung before 'going off' into changes, and again on 'coming round.'

Those uninitiated in the mysteries of bell-ringing will be surprised to learn that on six bells no fewer than 720 changes can be obtained; that is, the six numbers can be arranged in 720 distinct combinations. The addition of another bell increases the combination to 5040; while on eight bells the enormous number of 40,320 changes may be obtained. As about twenty-eight changes are rung per minute, it takes about three hours to accomplish the whole of the changes on seven bells; and thus to ring five thousand changes is considered a feat, and called a 'peal'; any less number being merely a 'touch.' When changes are rung on seven, nine, or eleven bells, all the eight, ten, or twelve bells are rung, the tenor bell—the key-note—always striking last; this practice is more musical than when the whole number of the bells are working in the changes. Change-ringing upon each number of bells has a distinctive name; thus changes on five bells are called doubles; on six, minor; seven, triples; eight, major; nine, caters; ten, royal; eleven, cinque; and twelve, maximus.

Changes are produced according to certain laws or 'methods'; and by a previously acquired knowledge of the method, each performer, by watching the rise and fall of the ropes, is able to work his bell in the same path in which it would be found to move if the changes were written down on paper. There are several different methods which are practised—namely, Plain Bob, Grandsire, Oxford or Kent Treble Bob, Stedman's Principle, Cambridge, London and Superlative Surprise, and Double Norwich Court. These can all be applied to the different numbers of bells. Thus a touch of Kent Treble Bob Major is that method rung on eight bells.

Although very few persons could possibly be debarred from practising change-ringing by want of physical strength, a good deal of perseverance is necessary to become a proficient in the art. After acquiring the sleight of hand necessary to ring a bell in rounds, a fair amount of practice is also necessary to obtain the quickness of eye—called 'rope-sight'—to work among the other

ropes, in changes. While his hands and eyes are thus busily employed, the ringer must also listen to ascertain whether the swing of the bell is so regulated that it strikes at a proper interval after the one immediately preceding it. In ringing on eight bells, the eight sounds are produced in about two seconds; a quarter of a second therefore elapses between the sounds of the consecutive bells; and as a variation of a quarter of this time is appreciable to a practised ringer, the error of the sixteenth part of a second would lead to jarring results. The hands, eyes, and ears must therefore be in constant unison during change-ringing; and as at the same time the mind must never be relaxed from the consideration of the 'method by which the changes are produced,' the mental and physical powers are kept in pretty active employment.

The fascination which this art has for its followers is shewn by the fact that all the great performances in ringing have been undertaken solely for the honour accorded to such feats. When a peal of five thousand changes is attempted, it is considered of no account unless it is 'true.' The requirements are somewhat exacting. If the same change should occur twice, through an error of the composer, it is a 'false' peal. The ringing must be completed without a stop or hitch; and as at any time during the three hours that will probably be occupied, a ringer may lose his way, and cause the others to be confused, a 'jumble out' will probably ensue; the conductor may miss a 'call,' which is required to carry the changes to the length required, or may make one too many; a man may miss his rope and send his bell over the balance; or a rope may break. Thus until the last change of a peal is struck, it is never safe for the ringers to congratulate themselves upon its performance.

Nowadays long peals are only considered as feats when the same men—only one man to each bell—ring throughout the peal. When a peal of great length is attempted there is, therefore, cause to fear that at the last moment one of the men at the 'heavy end,' as the bells near the tenor are called, may knock up. For instance, in ringing according to Stedman's principle—a very complicated method, on eleven bells—the peal of 7392 changes rung in 1848 in four hours and fifty-five minutes at St Martin's, Birmingham, where the tenor bell weighs thirty-five hundredweight, continued the 'longest on record' until 1851, when it was beaten by the College Youths, a very old-established London society of ringers, who rang 7524 changes in five hours and twenty-four minutes at St Giles', Cripplegate, where the tenor weighs thirty-six hundredweight. The Cumberland Youths, another old London society, thereupon tried to beat this performance by ringing 8184 changes at St Michael's, Cornhill, the tenor of which ring weighs forty-one hundredweight. On the first occasion they 'jumbled out' after ringing nearly six thousand changes; and at a subsequent attempt rang six hours and two minutes, but were then so knocked up that they could not finish the peal, and were compelled to stop when they had rung 7746 changes. Now, although this was longer than the peal rung by the College Youths, it was an incomplete performance, not being continued until the bells returned to the order of rounds, which they would have done at the 8184th



change. The Cripplegate peal was at last beaten by a peal of 8448 changes, rung in 1858, at Painswick in Gloucestershire. Although the tenor of the ring of twelve at Painswick only weighs twenty-eight hundredweight, the College Youths actually attempted to beat this length at St Saviour's, Southwark, where the tenor weighs fifty-two hundredweight. They were, however, unsuccessful, as after ringing over eight thousand changes in six hours and a half, they got into a 'jumble,' and thus a most remarkable feat was lost, and considered of no account, when another half-hour would have completed a performance which might never have been excelled. In their next attempt the College Youths were more fortunate, as on April 27, 1861, they rang at St Michael's, Cornhill, in six hours and forty-one minutes, a peal of 8580 changes of Stedman's Cinques, which still remains the longest length rung in this method on eleven bells.

The College and Cumberland Youths have long been worthy rivals in the different mysteries of change-ringing. While the former society dates its origin back to 1637, the latter claims its descent from an old society called the 'London Scholars,' whose origin, however, is lost in antiquity. The earliest known peal by the London Scholars is one of 5040 changes, rung in 1717; on the ten bells which were then in the tower of St Bride's, Fleet Street. This is said to have been the first five thousand ever rung on ten bells.

The rivalry between the societies of College and Cumberland Youths was at its greatest height in 1777. On January 20th, in that year, the Cumberlands rang 6240 changes on the bells of St Leonard's, Shoreditch. This was the longest which had been rung on ten bells by ten men only, and occupied four hours and thirty-four minutes. The tenor bell at St Leonard's weighs thirty-one hundredweight; and as in ringing these 6240 changes, the ringer would never be in a state of rest, as during nearly five hours he would cause a revolving plaything of over a ton and a half to make 6240 revolutions, it might be supposed that no set of men could easily be found who would be desirous of gaining the empty honour of merely exceeding such a performance by so many more hours or minutes. This, however, was not the opinion of the College Youths, who, on February 18th, in the same year, on the same bells, completed a peal of 10,000 changes in seven hours and twenty-eight minutes. After this the Cumberlands evidently took a little preliminary training on the bells of Shoreditch, as on March 12th they rang 5080 changes; on April 5th, 8120 changes; and then on May 10th capped the College Youths' performance by a peal of 10,200 changes in seven hours and forty minutes. The non-university College men were, however, equal to the occasion, and nine days afterwards rang 11,080 changes at the same place in eight hours and two minutes; a performance so extraordinary, that the Cumberland Youths were fain to let it stand as the longest on record until 1784, when, on March 27th, they actually accomplished, at Shoreditch, 12,000 changes in nine hours and five minutes; which peal until this day remains the longest ever rung on ten bells, when all the bells are rung in the changes.

It might be thought that such prolonged physical and mental exertion would have a bad

effect upon the performers; but, whether it is from the fact that only men of the strongest constitutions take a fancy for such exertion, or that the splendid exercise of ringing is, even when carried to such great excess, really productive of benefit, it yet remains a fact that ringers are noted for the great ages to which some of them live to take part in their favourite exercise. As an instance of longevity, the case of Thomas Barham is especially noteworthy. This man, who was a gardener at Leeds, in Kent, was passionately fond of ringing, and during his lifetime rang in considerably over one hundred peals, each of five thousand changes and upwards. He was born in 1725, and died in 1818, aged ninety-three years. At that time, in ringing long peals it was not regarded as a strict rule that there should be no relief to the performers, or that, as now, each bell should be rung throughout the peal by the same man; consequently there does not seem to have been any ordinary limit to the aspirations of the ringers of those days.

About 1750, Barham and his companions were endeavouring to achieve the extent of the changes on eight bells (40,320 changes), any man who was fatigued being relieved by some other ringer. In one of these attempts, on Monday, March 31, 1755, they commenced ringing at two o'clock in the afternoon, and rang until six o'clock on the Tuesday morning, when the sixth bell-clapper broke, after they had rung 24,800 changes. In this attempt, Barham rang the seventh bell for fourteen hours and forty-four minutes before he required to be relieved. On March 23, 1761, they again attempted it, but had the misfortune to overturn a bell after ringing seventeen thousand changes; but on April 7th and 8th in the same year, they are said to have accomplished the 40,320 changes in twenty-seven hours, the eight bells being manned at different times by fourteen men.

The most remarkable of the records which Barham left behind him were perhaps the 'Veteran' peals in which he took part. When fifty-five years of age, he rang in a peal of 5040 changes of Bob Major, occupying three hours and thirteen minutes, when the average age of the eight performers was sixty-one years. In another peal which occupied three hours and twelve minutes, the ages of the performers were 82, 70, 77, 65, 70, 65, 67, and 86; making an average of nearly seventy-three years. Barham also rang in peals occupying over three hours, when eighty-four and eighty-eight years of age. In Barham's case, it is thus fully shewn that the extraordinary performances he took part in did not in any way tend to disable him in his old age. Southey, in his *Doctor*, mentions a peal of Bob Major rung at Aston Church, near Birmingham, in the year 1796—but really in 1789—when eight men, some of whom he mentions were under twenty years of age, rang 14,224 changes in eight hours and forty-five minutes. This, Southey remarks, 'was the longest peal ever rung in that part of the country or anywhere else.' Certainly it was a very clever performance, considering that the tenor of the ring weighs twenty-one hundredweight; but it was really surpassed by a rival band of ringers, who rang at the same church on October 1, 1793, a peal of 15,360 changes of Bob Major in nine hours and thirty-one minutes.

This continued the greatest number of changes rung single-handed until 1868, when the College Youths rang 15,840 changes in nine hours and twelve minutes at St Matthew's, Bethnal Green. The tenor, however, at Bethnal Green is very much lighter than that of the Aston peal, and the latter still remains the longest length rung with such a heavy tenor, and in point of time exceeds the Bethnal Green performance by nineteen minutes.

So little is known about bell-ringing, that erroneous illustrations are prepared by even the best of our illustrated papers, at Christmas-time, and not a little faulty information regarding the *modus operandi* is added. Very few persons seem to be aware that many matters of practical and scientific interest are to be found in the almost unknown art of change-ringing.

#### CHRISTMAS IN THE ARCTIC REGIONS.

CHRISTMAS is essentially a family festival: our very earliest recollections of it are of a day spent by the whole family together; a day on which the social distinctions of nursery, school-room, and drawing-room were as far as possible abolished, and on which all the little ones who could behave with anything like discretion were taken to church and dined with the elders. As the children grew up and dispersed to school and college, Christmas was still the day on which all reassembled to make one family once more.

But at length there comes a time when this re-assembling is no longer possible, when the girls belong to new homes and new circles, and the boys are scattered abroad in distant lands, whence only loving thoughts can reach the 'old folks at home.' Then the good old Christmas toast, 'To all absent friends,' becomes full of meaning to the few who still assemble round the dear parental hearth, and is followed by a quiet pause, while imagination travels to all quarters of the globe, and the Christmas greeting infolds the whole world in its embrace. And the good wishes as they emanate from the home are met by returning thoughts from the sons, the brothers, it may be the husbands, in the distant lands where they too are keeping Christmas, though among circumstances very different to ours, and still striving as much as possible to keep up the customs they loved when they were young.

To us dwellers in Northern Europe, Christmas, with its apparently unseasonable heat, strikes us by its strange incongruity; but how strange must be a Christmas in the far north, where no sun rises to gladden the day on which the Sun of Righteousness rose upon the earth.

A year ago we had the happiness of welcoming back to their homes the latest heroes of the Polar Seas. We do not need to be reminded how, in May 1875, the *Alert* and the *Discovery* sailed from our shores, having for their destination the Pole itself. The Pole was not reached; that was beyond human power; but we felt that all that men could do was done, and we were thankful to see them home again. It is surely enough to have spent one Christmas in such desolation; in a higher latitude than ever man has reached before, and beyond the farthest point to which

even the Esquimaux, the hardy natives of the lands of perpetual snow, have penetrated in their most distant wanderings; beyond the boundary of all animal life on land or sea, there British sailors and British ships have wintered, and the British flag has floated upon a sea of eternal ice. All honour be to them.

It seems to us wonderful that even with every attainable comfort, men should be able to live through an arctic winter, as any disaster to the ships must be certain death to the crews. That this has been the case before now, we know. That it is not invariably the case we know also; and the following account gives us a good picture of the different ways in which two companion vessels spent their Christmas in the frozen sea in 1870, and shews what diverse vicissitudes may be encountered by ships in the same season.

In the spring of 1870, before the war with France had broken out and taken up almost all the thoughts of the nation, Germany sent out two ships, the *Germania* and the *Hansa*, with the hope of reaching the North Pole. As is usually the case in arctic expeditions, little could be done during the first season, and the ships were obliged to take up their winter-quarters off the east coast of Greenland. They had already been separated, so that the crew of one vessel had no idea of the condition of the other. An officer upon the *Germania* thus writes of their Christmas:

'To the men who have already lived many weary months among the icebergs, Christmas signifies, in addition to its other associations, that the half of their long night—with its fearful storms, its enforced cessation of all energy, its discomfort and sadness—has passed, and that the sun will soon again shed his life- and warmth-giving beams on the long-deserted North. From this time the grim twilight, during which noon has been hardly distinguishable from the other hours, grows daily lighter, until at length all hearts are gladdened, and a cheerful activity is once again called forth by the first glimpse of the sun. Christmas, the midnight of the arctic explorer, thus marks a period in his life which he has good cause to consider a joyful one. On no day would it be more natural for him to recall his home; and though far from that loved spot, and cut off from all intercourse save with his little band of comrades, and being, moreover, uncertain whether the ice will retain him in its grasp, as it has retained so many before him, he is right to keep the festival with all cheerfulness; thankful, while remembering what he has already passed through and achieved, and full of firm courage and confidence for the unknown future.

'What are our friends at home doing? was the thought that stirred us all as we prepared to keep our Christmas 1870, in the true German style. We had no suspicion of the mighty struggle in which our Fatherland was then engaged, for what could we know of the affairs of the world, from which no sound had reached us for so many long weeks. Our world was only in our ship, and all around us, in the half-light of the weary monotonous arctic night, lay the apparently boundless desert of ice, while the snow-laden hurricane howled and moaned through the silence. We thought too of our mates on our companion-ship the *Hansa*, from whom we had been separated. Did they still live? Had they been so fortunate

as to reach the shore, and were they, like us, honouring Christmas? Who could tell?

'For days before the festival, an unusual activity was observable all over the ship; and as soon as the severe storm which raged from December 16th to the 21st had abated, parties were organised, under our botanist Dr Pansch, to certain points of Sabine Island, near to which we were anchored, where, in a strangely sheltered nook, several varieties of a native Greenland evergreen plant, *Andromeda tetragona*, were to be found. A great quantity of this plant was conveyed on board, to be converted into a Christmas tree. Under the orders of Dr Pansch, the *Andromeda* was wound round small pieces of wood, several of which were attached, like fir-twigs, to a large bough; and when these boughs were fastened to a pole, they formed a very respectable fir-tree.

'After dinner on Christmas-day, the cabin was cleared for the completion of the preparations; and on our recall at six o'clock, we found that all had assumed an unwontedly festive appearance. The walls were decorated with the signal-flags and our national eagle; and the large cabin table, somewhat enlarged to make room to seat seventeen men, was covered with a clean white cloth, which had been reserved for the occasion. On the table stood the "fir" tree, shining in the splendour of many little wax-lights, and ornamented with all sorts of little treasures, some of which, such as the gilded walnuts, had already seen a Christmas in Germany; below the tree was a small present for each of us, provided long beforehand, in readiness for the day, by loving friends and relatives at home. There was a packet too for each of the crew, containing some little joking gift, prepared by the mirth-loving Dr Pansch, and a useful present also; while the officers were each and all remembered.

'When the lights burned down, and the resinous *Andromeda* was beginning to take fire, the tree was put aside, and a feast began, at which full justice was done to the costly Sicilian wine with which a friend had generously supplied us before we left home. We had a dish of roast seal! Some cakes were made by the cook, and the steward produced his best stores. For the evening, the division between the fore and aft cabins was removed, and there was free intercourse between officers and men; many a toast was drunk to the memory of friends at home, and at midnight a polar ball was improvised by a dance on the ice. The boatswain, the best musician of the party, seated himself with his hand-organ between the antlers of a reindeer which lay near the ship, and the men danced two and two on their novel flooring of hard ice!

'Such was our experience of a Christmas in the north polar circle; but the uncertainties of arctic voyaging are great, and the two ships of our expedition made trial of the widely different fates which await the traveller in those frozen regions; and while we on the *Germania* were singularly fortunate in escaping accidents and in keeping our crew, in spite of some hardships, in sound health and good spirits, the *Hansa* was crushed by the ice, and her crew, after facing unheard-of dangers, and passing two hundred days on a block of ice, were barely rescued to return home.'

Yet even to the crew of the ill-fated *Hansa* Christmas brought some share of festivities. The tremendous gale which had raged for many days

ceased just before the Day, and the heavy fall of snow with which it terminated, and which had almost buried the black huts that the shipwrecked men had constructed for themselves upon the drifting icebergs from the debris of the wreck, had produced a considerable rise in the temperature, and there was every indication that a season of calm might now be anticipated.

The log-book of the *Hansa* thus describes the celebration of the festival: 'The tree was erected in the afternoon, while the greater part of the crew took a walk; and the lonely hut shone with wonderful brightness amid the snow. Christmas upon a Greenland iceberg! The tree was artistically put together of fir-wood and mat-weed, and Dr Laube had saved a twist of wax-taper for the illumination. Chains of coloured paper and newly baked cakes were not wanting, and the men had made a knapsack and a revolver case as a present for the captain. We opened the leaden chests of presents from Professor Hochstetter and the Geological Society, and were much amused by their contents. Each man had a glass of port wine; and we then turned over the old newspapers which we found in the chests, and drew lots for the presents, which consisted of small musical instruments, such as fifes, jews-harps, trumpets, &c., with draughts and other games, puppets, crackers, &c. In the evening we feasted on chocolate and gingerbread.'

'We observed the day very quietly,' writes Dr Laube in his diary. 'If this Christmas be the last we are to see, it was at least a cheerful one; but should a happy return home be decreed for us, the next will, we trust, be far brighter. May God so grant!'

#### THE MISTLETOE.

THE following notes regarding the mistletoe, which we extract from Hardwicke's *Science-Gossip*, may be interesting to our readers. The writer informs us that 'the mistletoe abounds far too much in the apple orchards of Worcestershire and Herefordshire, but passes over pear-trees, and long observation has only given me two or three instances where pear-trees had mistletoe upon them. The apple was known to the Druids, and it has been suggested that the wily priests furtively transplanted their mystic plant from apple-trees, where it was sure to grow, to oaks, where otherwise it would be unlikely to be found. This is rendered not improbable by what Davies says in his *Celtic Researches*, that the apple-tree was considered by the Druids the next sacred tree to the oak, and that orchards of it were planted by them in the vicinity of their groves of oak. This was certainly an astute plan for keeping up the growth of the mistletoe.

'Blackbirds, thrushes, and fieldfares are fond of the mistletoe-berries, and when their bills get sticky from eating them, they wipe their mandibles on the branches of trees where they rest, and from the seeds there left enveloped in slime, young plants take their rise. I have thus observed mistletoe bushes extending in long lines across country where tall hawthorns rise from hedges bounding the pastures; for, next to apple-trees, mistletoe is most plentiful upon the hawthorn. But rather curiously, in modern times, the parasite has shewn a predilection for the black Italian poplar, which has been much planted of late years; and wherever in the Midland counties this poplar has been

planted, the mistletoe is sure to appear upon the trees in a short time. The lime is also very often obliged to support the plant, which disfigures its symmetry, raising huge knots upon its branches; and I have observed limes that must have nourished protuberant bushes for thirty years or more. The maple, the ash, and the willow have frequently mistletoe bushes upon them; but common as the elm is, that tree almost entirely escapes an intrusion; and indeed I never but once saw mistletoe upon an elm. On the oak it is very uncommon in the present day, and where apparent, it is on trees of no very great age, whatever their descent may be.

'My friend Professor Buckman, who has written economically upon orchards in his useful book on *Farm Cultivation*, asserts that while the mistletoe is hurtful to the tree in hastening its decay, yet in apple-trees it has the effect of pressing on their maturity and fruit-bearing earlier than would be the case without the parasite, which urges a quicker growth upon its foster-parent. The tenant of an orchard would thus be benefited for a few years, though premature decay would be the result.

'Authors may differ as to the etymology of mistletoe, but it appears to me that our common English name has no very recondite origin. *Mistion* is an obsolete old English word, used, however, as late as in the writings of Boyle; and this is defined in Dr Johnson's original folio edition of his Dictionary as the state of being mingled. Now this is truly the condition of our plant, which is intermingled with the foliage of other trees, and mixes up their juices with its own; and is indeed in rural places still simply called the *mistle*. If to this we add the old English *tod* or *toe*, signifying *bush*, we have at once the derivation, meaning the *mingled bush*, mixed up and growing among foliage dissimilar to its own. Still, in winter its stiff and leathery evergreen leaves and dense bushy aspect give it a visible position on its own account; and thus the epithet of *frigore viscum* given it by Virgil is peculiarly applicable. It is certainly remarkable that the hanging up of mistletoe in houses for mirthful purposes and emblematical of Christmas should so long endure that the Midland towns have their markets filled with it as Christmas approaches, and loads of it find a ready sale in the north of England (and Scotland), where the plant is a rarity, if found at all.'

#### A LOCAL INSTANCE OF CANINE ATTACHMENT.

A correspondent of the *Rotherham Advertiser* writes: 'Stories almost innumerable have been enumerated illustrative of the sagacity of the dog and its attachment to its owner. A remarkable and well-authenticated instance, which may not be uninteresting, has just come under my notice, as having occurred some years ago in the neighbourhood of Rotherham. A person in Rotherham obtained a young shepherd dog, which he retained for a long period. While in his possession it became much attached to the whole of the family, and especially to two of its master's sons. After a time, circumstances transpired which led to the animal being sent to live permanently at the residence of a farmer at Thorpe Salvin. After the lapse of a considerable time, one of the sons of the dog's former master paid a visit to the farm. The dog on seeing him appeared

to be overjoyed, and was most demonstrative in its indications of delight. During his stay it would not leave him; and when it became necessary for him to leave in the evening, the animal could scarcely be restrained, and had to be chained up in the room where the family were sitting. As the visitor was taking leave of his host, the poor animal howled in a most piteous manner, and manifested other unmistakable signs of grief. Immediately he had left the house, the dog all at once became quiet, and settling down on the floor, seemed to be asleep. The strange and sudden change which had come over the animal was remarked, and on the parties going to him, he was found to be quite dead. The singular occurrence became well known in the neighbourhood, and it was regarded that the dog had died literally heart-broken. When the same dog was only a puppy it was attacked and beaten by a bigger dog. The defeated animal shewed his sagacity and at the same time his revengeful feelings, by waiting until eighteen months had elapsed, when it had fully grown, and then he lay in wait for his old adversary as near as possible to where the former combat took place, and gave his former enemy a "drubbing" that nearly cost him his life.'

#### MONUMENT AND TURE.

FULL in the midst of these gray bounds  
A lordly stone upswells;  
The scroll, that thrice its bulk surrounds,  
The passing stranger tells  
Of what renowned line he came,  
Who 'neath the marble lies,  
What deeds he wrought of mark and fame,  
That live when mortal dies.

And deep is graved how high his worth  
Was prized, how widely known,  
What honours crowned him from his birth,  
What grief had raised the stone:  
Yet he sleeps calmly on beneath,  
Where Silence mocks at Fame;  
Nor heeds the pomp made over death,  
This blazon of his name.

Some paces off and thou wilt see  
A grave of simple show,  
As lowly and retired as he  
Had been who rests below;  
High rank and riches kept afar,  
While they enjoyed their day,  
The high and low—what social bar  
May now divide their clay?

No honours mark the poor man's tomb,  
This green secluded spot,  
Yet still the pansy's purple bloom  
Proclaims him not forgot;  
No graven stone reclines above  
To mourn the humble dead,  
But woman's grief and children's love  
Bedew the hallowed bed.

Nor here is any record hung  
Of lineage and race,  
The turf alone tells whence he sprang  
Who fills this narrow space;  
His virtues slumber with his dust,  
Unrecked of and unknown;  
But God in Whom reposed his trust  
Receives him for His own.

D. F.

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